

Stonington Planning Board meeting

16 November 2023

PRESENT: Renee Sewell, Ben Jackson, Bob Winters, Diana Turner, Anna Goff, Caleb Scott, Peter Haskell

PUBLIC: Brian Billings, Ryan and Jennifer Larrabee, Priscilla Allen, Linda Campbell, Andrew McCullough, Kathleen Billings, Sandy Ward, Patti Oliver, Rebecca Daugherty, Caitlin Porto, Jennifer Hadley

ZOOM: Ron Watson, Mary Costigan, Marge Anderson, Jim Anderson, Deborah Orrill, Blair Sanders, Tom Yaroschuk

Meeting was brought to order by the Chair at 6:30pm. A quorum was present.

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the last meeting, as written.

Moved: Turner

Second: Jackson

Approved by vote: 7:0

Item 1: Site Plan Review for Jack's Brook Subdivision, Oceanville (Map 2, Lot 78), a 26-acre waterfront parcel divided into 8 lots, applied for by Ryan and Jennifer Larrabee.

McCullough (engineer) noted that the plan before us is revised to include a minimum 200' setback from the shore for each lot. One of the lots (#8) will be "affordable".

Owners are asking for two waivers from ordinance restrictions.

(1) Four lots are smaller than the minimum 2-acre requirement.

(2) A waiver from providing a high-intensity hydrologic survey which would indicate adequate water supply and proper conditions for wastewater discharge.

Engineer indicated that the parcel in question lies outside of the town's watershed district, all uplands and vernal pools are mapped and that there are four existing wells in proximity that currently provide adequate supply. A high-intensity survey would add delay and significant expense to the project.

Costigan (town attorney) indicated that ordinance restrictions are clear. The facts that the parcel lies within the shore-land zone and that some lots are undersize automatically triggers the need for the hydrologic study. As an alternative, Costigan suggested that since tonight's meeting is just a review of the application, the additional time and expense of the survey could be avoided by requiring a written statement from a qualified professional stating that conditions are satisfactory for development.

Additional questions focused on road accessibility for emergency vehicles and the plan for hammerhead turnoffs at the ends of the access roads. Engineer indicated that the plan calls for

20' travelways where two vehicles could pass. "Hammerheads are superior to cul-de-sacs since they are larger, provide more room for plowed snow accumulation and adequate space for emergency vehicles to turn and reverse direction". The plan has been reviewed by the Stonington Fire Chief and has been approved by him. Land owners agreed to provide additional pull-offs in several locations along the access roads to facilitate vehicles to pass.

Questions from the floor addressed concerns about the impact of new water demands on existing wells in the area, sight-lines for traffic entering and exiting the access road, views from Oceanville Road and estimated real estate taxes.

DECISION: The Board was in agreement that this application for Preliminary Subdivision Approval is incomplete, lacking sufficient hydrologic data. We ask for more information from a professional hydrologist before reconsidering.

Item 2: Site Plan Review for a change of use, converting an art gallery to a restaurant.
Application from Ronald Watson, 68 Main LLC (08A, 052)

Application was reviewed by the Board and was found lacking in sufficient detail. A clear vision of exactly what the owner's plans are was not provided.

- (1) No detailed drawings for the commercial kitchen space.
- (2) No definitive opinion from the State Fire Marshal
- (3) No detailed drawings of the dining room configuration
- (4) No indication of how the restaurant might impact the second floor condominiums
- (5) No information about accommodations for accessibility

DECISION: The Board was in agreement that this preliminary hearing showed the application to be incomplete. We ask that the owner provide a narrative of his specific intentions, accurate drawings in sufficient detail and a definitive written opinion from the State Fire Marshall before we reconsider.

This will be the last scheduled meeting of the Stonington Planning Board for year 2023. Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, January 18, 2024.

Moved to adjourn meeting at 7:55pm.

Moved: Turner

Second: Jackson

Approved by vote: 7:0

Respectfully submitted,

R N Winters - Secretary

